

# Scatter Creek Aquifer Project: Final Survey Response

September 17, 2013

Surveys were included as a self-mailer in the newsletter mailed to all residents and property owners in the Scatter Creek Aquifer Area in July 2013, a total of 5,493 newsletters mailed. There was also a link to the survey on our website, which was open for over three months. There were also copies available at the July 30, 2013 Community Workshop, attended by approximately 60 people.

This data is from the final responses, a total of 65 respondents. Some answers add up to more than 100% because multiple answers were allowed.

**Summary:** As expected, there is a wide range of opinion about the issue of responsibility for clean, safe drinking water. Most people felt that drinking water quality was either extremely (50.8%) or very (38.5%) important to them. About 42% felt there was reason to be concerned about the quality of drinking water in the Scatter Creek Aquifer, the others were divided between needing more information and thinking there is not a reason to be concerned. Several people expressed great confidence in Rochester Water Association.

Multiple choices were allowed to the question “*Who should be responsible for solving or preventing drinking water quality problems in the aquifer?*” About 32% felt this should be a shared responsibility, about the same (34%) felt only residents should have that responsibility. Only 6% felt it was solely a governmental responsibility, and 8% thought water providers should be solely responsible.

In response to questions about making changes, a substantial minority (about 16%) said no. For many, it depends on what the type of actions or programs might be and importantly, how much they will cost. Comments cover a full spectrum of attitudes and concern ranging from concern about the drinking water, to a strong distrust of government.

## Complete Responses:

### 1. How important is drinking water quality to you?

50.8% Extremely      38.5% Very      7.7% Somewhat      0 Not very      3.1% Not

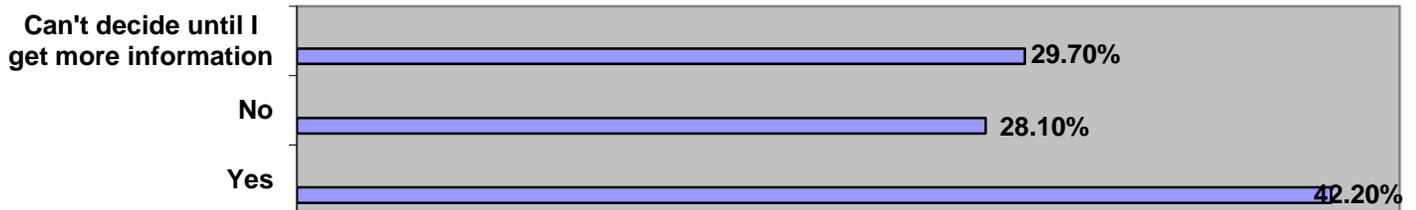


Comments:

- But let us monitor our own water. No more government in our business.
- I have served 14 years on Rochester Water Association Board.

**2. Do you believe there is reason to be concerned about drinking water quality in the Scatter Creek Aquifer?**

42.2% Yes                      28.1% No                      29.7% Can't decide until I get more information



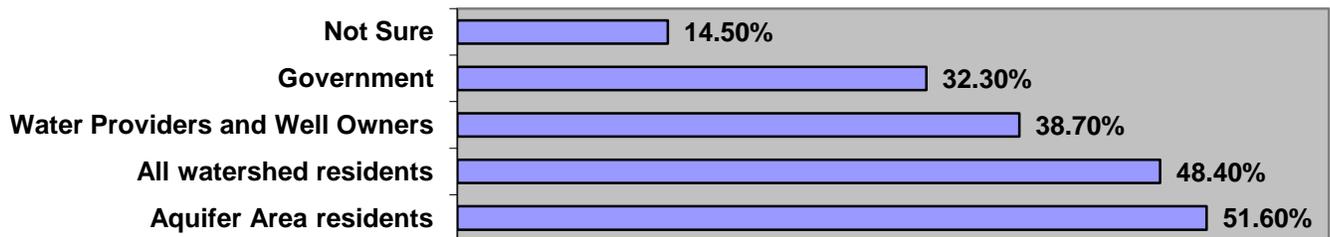
Comments:

- You are the problem.
- Depends on water quality testing.
- Overkill by county.

**3. Who should be responsible for solving or preventing drinking water quality problems in the aquifer?**

Note: Multiple responses were allowed, so totals are more than 100%. About 32% felt this should be a shared responsibility, about the same (34%) felt only residents should have that responsibility. Only 6% felt it was solely a governmental responsibility, and 8% thought water providers should be solely responsible.

51.6% Aquifer Area residents  
48.4% All watershed residents  
38.7% Water Providers and well owners  
32.3% Government  
14.5% Not sure



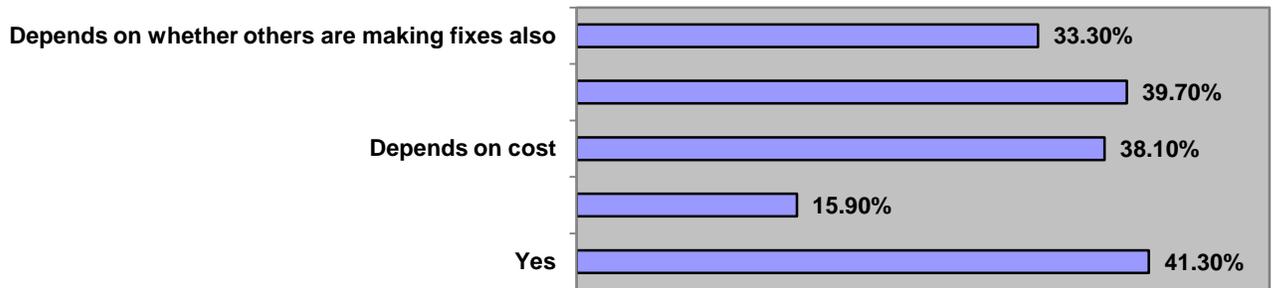
Comments:

- Can not trust the government.
- No one needs to do this. Leave us alone!
- Gov't for not enforcing permit/licensing requirements for large development.

- All watershed residents, businesses, and farms.
- The ones that cause the problems
- Government is needed to enforce laws.

**4. Would you be willing to change your practices or make changes on your property to protect drinking water quality?** Note: Multiple responses were allowed, so totals are more than 100%.

41.3% Yes    15.9% No    38.1% Depends on cost    39.7% Depends on the programs    33.3% Depends on whether others are changing and making fixes also

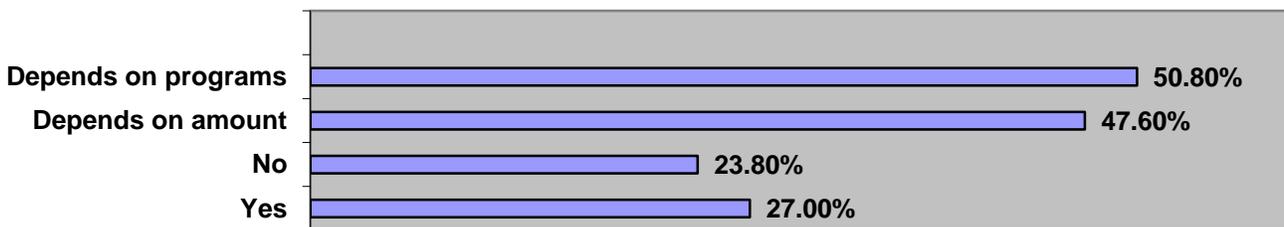


Comments:

- You'll make us tear down buildings and stop us from growing gardens.
- Nothing's broke!

**5. Would you be willing to pay for programs to correct or prevent drinking water quality problems?**

27.0% Yes    23.8% No    47.6% Depends on amount    50.8% Depends on programs



Comments:

- We already do.
- Government should pay like they do all over the world.
- Reasonable
- Not necessity to have more employees, Let the homeowners and well owners decide on their own solution if one is necessity.
- The ones that cause the problems should pay.
- We already pay Rochester Water Association. They do an outstanding job of monitoring and maintaining our large water system.

**6. Whom else should we talk to as we develop options to protect drinking water quality? This might include groups, organizations, businesses, or individuals. Any contact information you can provide is helpful.**

- Port of Centralia
- Centralia Sewer Plant
- Great Wolf Lodge
- Cattle Farms on James Road
- Violet Prairie Water - Todd Hanson, Hanson Construction
- Property owners
- Rochester Water Association - Board of Directors Lowell Deguise, Manager of Rochester Water Association. Rochester Water Assoc. has 43 years worth of records that could be used in conjunction with the Thurston County well studies.
- Capitol Land Trust - 360-943-3012. They protect key drinking water properties in the aquifer area.
- No one, let us be
- State and federal DOT (public roadway) run-off
- Definitely water providers, particularly H&R.
- School districts
- Any "local" farm associations,
- Officials from closed Maple Lane School
- Center for Natural Lands Management.
- Departments of Licenses and Permits NATIONAL septic development organizations
- Infant and breastfeeding organizations
- Businesses
- Gravel mines, industries,
- State, county, cities, towns – about roadway pollution: oil run off, tire wear off, spills, wrecking - salvage yards. In short, enforce the rules, laws, ordinances. Better enforcement.
- Department of Ecology, Water Quality Program
- Land Use Planners
- Real Estate companies
- Developers
- Farmers
- No idea
- ALL who will be effected by any changes!
- Cattlemen's Association
- Youth groups

**7. Other comments:**

- We have concerns about the effect Miles Sand and Gravel will have on the aquifer. Also, livestock needs to be kept out of Scatter Creek. A year ago Fred Colvin applied fertilizer to his pasture and the fumes were so strong it burned our eyes.

- You need to also include the Tenino area
- The second item in fall 2013 indicates that the county already has its mind made up to change septic system management. Yet it does not appear that there is enough data to know if that change is necessary or not. Remember we are not rich.
- I am amazed at the people that think it is ok to dump their used motor oil on their driveway to keep the dust down. I wish they cared.
- Direct communication/education of local property owners about the impact of fertilizers, pesticides, insecticides, etc. So much indiscriminate spraying of herbicides. People just don't realize the impact or the availability of more natural alternatives. Thank you.
- This infers we have a problem when WE DO NOT! Our water is provided by Rochester Water Association which constantly monitors, tests and takes care of customers. Are we concerned overall, YES!, but inference that we have problem by Rochester Water Association is absurd.
- Stay away from my property.
- Have had well tested 2 years apart. Both reports come back excellent water - if problems with water occurs I would then be concerned. There are more rocks than dirt on my property which cleans the water.
- Our nitrate levels are a little higher than typical background, but within limits. Our water is acidic. Apparently the aquifer is acidic, according to county lab. It's eaten through several of our fixtures in 5 years since they were newly installed. We are concerned about health effects and wish we knew better what to do.
- I am in favor of clean water and I try to do my part to protect its quality. My fear is the county will use this cause to further control or seize our water rights completely.
- We strongly support this project.
- We need more residents on this, the only ones I see are business representation, not one individual who is just a resident! Business people should not be making all the decisions.
- Some groups are, I feel, are destroying the aquifer by taking soil and drainage away from area.
- You created the problem by changing the 5 acre zoning. You're just after more control over our life. STOP-STOP-STOP Leave us ALONE!!!
- Whose wells are you testing? We have lived at our address since October of 2010 and have not seen or have been asked to test our water.
- Thank you so much for addressing this important issue!
- I do not need government interference, taxes, or regulations to keep clean drinking water! When it comes to Thurston County, less is more!
- Require advance public notice of ANY development and require environmental impact studies.
- Everyone should help PREVENT and no one should be left alone to SOLVE a problem caused by others.
- Only area property owners should be allowed in the decision making process.
- I think that this whole nitrate scare is another trumped up, make-believe issue to control or stop growth in the south county. Nitrate levels have been dropping even as population has increased. The few high readings have been in my opinion "cherry picked." The few areas close to dairy farms or areas with poor wellhead management have been tested and show high nitrate levels. With less and less agriculture the levels have improved. If more people and more septic systems were the source of the problem why aren't nitrate levels increasing? So why are we promoting agrotourism? Organic farming uses animal manures which seems to make the problem worse. Bottom line - You have an agenda. Stop growth, force people into the cities and totally control OUR property. If you want to control my property then buy it from me.

- Property taxes are too high.
- When quality is borderline or mostly ok and trend in quality is flat, sustainable, or down, then individual homeowners can do more if they want and government should stay out of it.
- Make sure your baseline information is accurate.
- The need to protect our drinking water must be balanced with our need to use our property, businesses, and homes. Over regulation & fees (are) a huge problem! (*paper torn*)
- It appears that our aquifer has protective hard pan above it which resists the intrusion of surface runoff. I believe that our aquifer actually originates in the Mt. Rainier area and travels underground to reach our area at a comparatively fast rate. The newer methods of sealing well heads in areas of manure application seems to have been effective in limiting surface water from reaching the aquifer. It appears that the potential for contamination has already been dealt with in a very commonsense manner at this time.
- Why are some paying for ULID and others are not?
- Why is septic being targeted? What about commercial land use and livestock?
- Would graywater diversion systems help this situation by increasing time for sewage to be worked on by bacteria and reducing water pushed through septic system?